

Connections

March 2006

Rahn Calls for State Employee Pay Increase

by Shane Peck

In his annual State of Transportation Address on Feb. 7, Director Pete Rahn highlighted many of MoDOT's great accomplishments over the past year and called for a four percent across-the-board pay increase for all state employees.



MoDOT Director Pete Rahn called for a four percent pay increase for state employees in his Feb. 7 State of Transportation Address.

"MoDOT employees are doing more, but like other state employees they have not

received a significant pay increase in five years. Therefore, I ask the General Assembly to pass a four percent across-the-board pay increase for Missouri's dedicated state employees," Rahn said. "Missouri has a lot of things to be proud of – being last in state employee pay isn't one of them."

Rahn provided clear justification for providing greater financial incentives to Mo-

DOT workers. He cited the unprecedented amount and scope of work employees are being asked to deliver.

"We are asking all MoDOT employees, however, to accomplish extraordinary feats," Rahn said. "We are asking them to complete the single largest transportation project in Missouri history (Interstate 64 in St. Louis), we are asking them to deliver the largest construction program in Missouri history, we are asking them to deliver the Smooth Roads Initiative a full year early and we are holding them accountable for the results at every step along the way."

He also singled out five MoDOT employees for reacting heroically to extraordinary circumstances. District 9 employees Henry Haggard, Ben Meredith, Justin Blankenship and Nick Lambert were introduced for their outstanding response to the Taum Sauk Dam failure.

"They and many other members of the MoDOT family went home covered in mud, but today they are wrapped in our appreciation," Rahn said.

Additionally, Lee Ann Kelly of District 3 was recognized for her lifesaving actions on two different occasions. She responded to traffic crashes that happened within two weeks of each other near a work zone in which she was working.

"Local law enforcement officials credited Lee Ann with saving both drivers' lives," Rahn said.

At the same time, Rahn highlighted the great progress MoDOT has made in the last year. He discussed the Smoother, Safer, Sooner program and the strides the department has made toward completing it. He also reiterated MoDOT's acceptance



Rahn's speech recognized several district employees for going above and beyond the call of duty.

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Once Again Construction Season Brings More Work Zones Than Ever

by Melissa Black and Sandy Hentges

This year's construction season promises to be as big – if not bigger – than last year's record-breaking schedule. On any given day, we'll have more than 1,000 work zones on the state system. We're also beginning work earlier, and we're doing more to communicate these messages to motorists.

Throughout the construction season and especially during Work Zone Awareness Week, April 3-9, we'll work to let motorists know we're doing everything we can to minimize the inconvenience of our work zones. However, our messages will also tell them they still might experience delays as part of our full-speed-ahead effort to complete the Smooth Roads Initiative by the end of the year.

Here's how we'll be reaching out to Missouri drivers:

- Statewide radio ads on various stations and baseball networks. These will be concentrated around Interstate 44 where a majority of the work is taking place.
- Billboard advertising in every district.
- A statewide construction map highlighting more than 100 major projects statewide, as well as a map outlining the I-44 roadwork.
- Fliers and posters.
- Our Web site work zone map and other postings.

The goal is to remind motorists to "Drive Smart" in work zones to keep themselves and all highway workers safe. Check out the latest information at www.modot.org.



Work zones such as this one will soon be cropping up again statewide.

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Tom Romas recognized for life-saving actions

Pay Increase

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of the governor’s challenge to complete the Smooth Roads Initiative a full year early.

“This is a major challenge, but the governor was right to stress fixing our roads as fast as possible. It is paramount to the success of our state. The sooner we finish, the sooner we benefit from the results. It will not be easy, but we will meet the governor’s challenge,” Rahn declared to a standing ovation by legislators and others in attendance.

The address was enacted by state law in 2003. The statute requires the director of MoDOT to discuss the state of Missouri’s transportation system annually in front of a joint session of the Missouri General Assembly.

MoDOT has embraced the State of Transportation Address as a way to build relationships and share information with legislators. District engineers, Governmental Relations staff and others were available in the state Capitol rotunda to discuss local projects as well as big-picture issues.

The department also distributed news releases statewide, made the speech available in printed and video formats online and posted audio sound bites on the MoDOT Web site. These efforts resulted in extensive media coverage that emphasized many of the key points from the speech.

(See related stories on pages 8 and 14)

Rahn Updates Employees on State of Transportation

by Sally Oxenhandler

The day after his State of Transportation Address to Missouri lawmakers, Director Pete Rahn met with another important constituency: MoDOT employees.

Rahn spent part of his morning talking with a group of randomly selected Central Office employees about what’s on their minds. Here’s a summary of the questions raised at that meeting. You can request a videotape of the entire meeting by contacting Central Office’s Community Relations Division.

Q: If the General Assembly doesn’t pass a pay raise, will the commission consider giving us one or instituting performance pay raises?

A: As you know, I called for a pay raise in my State of Transportation address. However, it’s been 10 years since the commission has gone against the direction of the rest of state government. They just haven’t been able to do that politically. My sense is that any employee pay increases will be directly linked to legislative action.

Q: Some of our jobs were lowered up to three steps in the most recent job study. This makes us feel as if we’re not important.

A: Job studies have nothing to do with individual performance. They compare the wages we pay to the public sector. Job studies have every-

thing to do with giving our jobs a fair market value. We have to do them to keep competitive, but it has nothing to do with how much you’re appreciated. We don’t lower salaries because of a job study, and we hope that in the future we won’t see this great of disparity.

Q: I see you as a great visionary, but where will you be in 2010 when our funding starts to decline?

A: I hope to be here. When I worked as the director of the New Mexico Department of Transportation, I loved my job at the end of eight years as much as on day one. My intentions are to be here as long as the commission lets me stay.

Q: The commission just approved a new employee incentive program (Performance Plus). What do you envision for those who aren’t so closely tied to projects? For example, would you consider providing eight hours of leave for employees who didn’t take any sick leave in a year?



Cathy Morrison

Director Pete Rahn holds a question-and-answer session with Central Office employees.

A: Everyone will have the opportunity to align with some tangible result and come up with ways to cut costs – that will always be the incentive. The result we chose for the pilot program – cutting construction costs – was easy. This way we can see if this type of program will work. My hope is to be able to provide cash for performance results, but I wouldn’t exclude time off.

Q: What internal and external weaknesses does MoDOT need to address?

A: I really don’t think we have massive weaknesses to address. I feel MoDOT is a well-run organization. When I was looking at taking this job, I thought MoDOT was broken. But when I came here I found that wasn’t true – we just needed a break. Amendment 3 was that break. It helped us be able to show we do know what we’re doing. We set extreme goals for Amendment 3, and

you did it! I would never have set the bar so high if I didn’t have confidence in you. Our one threat is that we can’t give pay raises. How long can the state balance the budget on the backs of state employees?

Motor Carriers Gear Up for Traveling Tourists

by DeAnne Bonnot

The wheels on the bus go ‘round and ‘round – safely, thanks to the efforts of MoDOT Motor Carrier Service’s Safety and Compliance staff. Every year, inspectors go over 550 or more touring buses and other motor coaches checking the condition of brakes, axles and other safety equipment and making certain that drivers keep themselves and their records up to par.

Checks take place at various high tourism locations throughout Missouri. Because southwest Missouri is the nation’s top motor coach draw, many of these safety tests are conducted in and around Branson. Soon, inspections will start on the Six Flags and Worlds of Fun parking lots in Eureka and Kansas City, respectively.

“The inspections are all about safety for coach passengers and the traveling public,” said Mark Biesemeyer, transportation program manager. “Anything that could put people at risk, be it bad windshield wipers or an over-tired driver, will result in the bus being put out of service until the problem is resolved.”



Shaun Schmitz

Mark Biesemeyer inspects a motor coach.

Missouri has quite a reputation among the motor coach community. During inspections, drivers often comment that their company makes sure they send their best equipment to Missouri because the chance of inspection is high. Since the program began in 1993, the percent of vehicles placed out of service each year has dropped from 25 percent to 8 percent. A corresponding drop in the number of crashes involving motor coaches tells MCS their efforts are paying off.

Program Will Provide Employee Incentives, Rewards

The reality of working in a government setting often means we have to settle for a pat on the back or a nice note of appreciation for a job well done. A new employee incentive program that will take effect April 1 is designed to change that.

The pilot program - called Performance Plus - provides up to \$2,000 in cash incentives per year to about 550 eligible employees for meeting a very important tangible result: fast projects that are of great value. This value relates directly to our core business, is highly visible to the traveling public and provides an opportunity for significant impact.

The program has the potential to reward MoDOT employees who are permanently assigned to construction project offices statewide if they achieve a final construction cost of one percent above the contract award amount (or less) on projects in our Statewide Transportation Improvement Program. The savings that come from reducing

project costs will fund the quarterly payments.

If it proves successful, the program will be offered to additional employees who come up with ways to cut costs.

“We know this pilot program has some challenges because it only affects a limited number of employees,” said Director Pete Rahn. “But it’s

PerformancePlus

just that – a pilot – and at this time it’s still limited in scope. We hope it will grow to be a broader employee incentive program, but first we want to make sure it accomplishes our goals.”

Additional information, including a fact sheet and some frequently asked questions, can be found on the Intranet at wwwi.

Online Game Lets Missourians Make Spending Decisions

by Sue Cox

Virtually speaking, Pete Rahn could be considering a second career! As host of a new electronic game on MoDOT's

we invest our transportation dollars says a lot about our priorities and has a major impact on the state's economic engine.

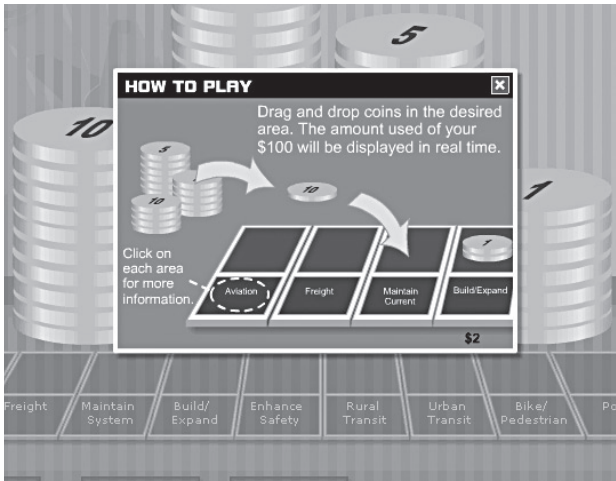
We've developed this online challenge to see how you would fund the priorities."

The game summarizes players' results and tells them how they compare to others throughout the state. It also shows players the current funding allocation MoDOT follows.

"You'll find spending this money isn't a real easy task," Rahn said. "There are many factors that go into deciding how much money is allocated to each transportation priority. Some of these factors are beyond MoDOT's control, such as federally mandated funding. But for those we do control, there is much research and debate before the final decision is made.

"We want to know what Missourians think because we need everyone's ideas about how we successfully work together for the sake of Missouri's future," he added.

The funding allocation game is part of MoDOT's Missouri Advance Planning or MAP initiative, MoDOT's long-range planning effort that is based on public participation. It includes a statewide dialogue about what Missouri's transportation system could and should do for its citizens and how best to fulfill the expectations. For more information about MAP or to offer comments, visit the project Web site at www.mapourfuture.org.



A new online challenge lets players make transportation spending decisions.

Web site, www.modot.org, he'll tell you how taxpayers' interaction, participation and feedback are key to planning for Missouri's transportation future. (Note: Users must have Flash Player Version 8 installed on their computers to use all the game's features. The Flash Player is free of charge on Macromedia's Web site.)

This new funding allocation game gives Missourians the chance to call the shots. So, if you were the director of the Missouri Department of Transportation, how would you pay for transportation services, and what would you make a priority? Here's your chance to take charge!

The game challenges players to take care of the state's roads and bridges, as well as other modes of transportation that include aviation, waterways, public transportation and rails. It poses questions about freight, safety, technology, bicyclists and pedestrians.

"One of the biggest challenges we face is how to pay for all the transportation services and improvements Missourians tell us they want," said Rahn. "How

Coalition Web Site Rocks

by Melissa Black and Sandy Hentges

The Missouri Coalition for Roadway Safety's updated Web site at www.savemolives.com really rocks.

That's because visitors are greeted upfront with a hard-hitting public service announcement pronouncing "Pickups rock. They also roll." The campaign is designed to persuade young pickup truck drivers to buckle up.

"This new site allows us to offer a lot of useful information to our safety partners, as well as those interested in traveling safely," said Leanna Depue, Highway Safety Director and chairperson of the Missouri's Blueprint for Safer Roadways' executive committee. "It's another great tool to help us reduce injuries and deaths on Missouri roadways."

The coalition is made up of federal, state and local officials. In 2004, the group created Missouri's Blueprint for Safer Roadways, which outlines eight essential strategies to reduce deaths and injuries due to traffic crashes.

ARRIVE ALIVE

Besides some state-of-the-art graphics, the site offers information on Blueprint resources and programs, a safety calendar, statistics, training, a list of Blueprint partners and contact information. All of the information is aimed at showing visitors how they can Arrive Alive when traveling and how they can spread that message to others.

"We encourage everyone to visit and promote the new site," Depue said. "It's really a great tool for anyone looking for highway safety information."

For more information about the coalition, Missouri's Blueprint for Safer Roadways or how to Arrive Alive, visit www.savemolives.com.



Participants in MoDOT's Black History month celebration on Feb. 17 learned more about black heritage through history, trivia and food. MoDOT held the celebration in conjunction with the Federal Highway Administration.

MoDOT in the Limelight

by Rachel Van Tuyl

MoDOT's outstanding work didn't go unnoticed in 2005. National news media, from National Geographic to The New York Times, ran stories noting MoDOT employees' hard work and efforts. Here is just a sample of the national coverage MoDOT received last year.

- The Fall 2005 issue of Mizzou Magic, a science news publication issued by the University of Missouri-Columbia, was dedicated to Missouri roads. The magazine featured articles on road composition, building bridges, highway redesign and MoDOT's ARAN van.
- District 3 worked with National Geographic on a story and video about Route 61 and the SMART kids program.

- District 3 also helped Public Works Magazine last October on a story about the award-winning Highway Survivor game.
- MoDOT received a great deal of coverage for its quick response to the Taum Sauk reservoir failure. FOX Radio in New York and the Associated Press both contacted District 9 for information on MoDOT's actions in response to the tragedy.
- The Kansas City Scout Traffic Operations Center was featured in an Intelligent Transportation System article in the October/November 2005 issue of Traffic Technology International.

- MoDOT's External Audit section was commended for its work in auditing federal and state-funded railroad signal crossing projects in an article in The New York Times last February.
- An article titled "MoDOT Paves the Way for Safety" was featured in the November 2005 issue of Roads & Bridges. The article, written by Community Relations intern Megan Mills, discussed MoDOT's comprehensive pavement marking and striping plan. The October 2005 issue of Roads & Bridges commended MoDOT for its work on the northern section of Highway 71.
- MoDOT's Plant Growth Regulator program was featured in the July

- 2005 issue of American City & County. The article discussed how the program reduces the need for mowing, cuts labor costs and improves worker safety by using herbicides to control roadside vegetation.
- Public Roads magazine has been working on an article about the benefits of MoDOT's Tracker. The article will run in the July/August 2006 issue.
- Time Magazine recently interviewed MoDOT Director Pete Rahn about our new cell phone technology, which will improve traffic monitoring. MoDOT was contacted by numerous media outlets throughout the country and the British Broadcasting Corporation on this topic.

Damage Collections On the Rise

by Rachel Van Tuyl

More than half a million dollars.

That’s how much more the Risk Management Unit collected in damages in 2005. The unit recovered more than \$3 million in 2005, up from about \$2.3 million collected in the past year, said Gerry Foster, claims administration manager in Risk Management.

The unit collects money from negligent third parties for damage done to MoDOT vehicles, signs, equipment and property. Maggie Meier, senior risk management specialist, attributes the rise in money collected to a variety of factors.

“The districts and Central Office are making property damage a higher priority,” Meier said “We’ve also had some large damages this year with three or four bridges hit. With the collaborative effort of the districts and Central Office Bridge Maintenance, we’ve been able to collect on them.”

Foster agrees that the increased district participation has helped the property damage unit to identify offenders and collect on damages. In the 2005 fiscal year they were able to return collections greater than \$2 million back to the districts and divisions. Beginning

in the 2007 fiscal year, the districts will receive all collections for property damage - a great financial incentive.

“It helps the district to help us,” Foster said.

When property is damaged, field personnel must identify the damages and ask that a property damage number be put into the accounting system. Expenses for labor, equipment rental and materials are then charged to this number.

MoDOT’s accounting system accumulates charges and a bill is sent to the individual or his or her insurance. If the bill exceeds \$500, and people are unable to pay, Meier said they risk having their driver’s licenses suspended.

Offenders are usually identified from police reports. Unknown offenders are checked against the TMS system to match them to accident reports. Even when it’s unknown who has done the damage, Risk Management encourages districts to set up property damage reports because they have up to five years to recover damages.

Foster said identifying offenders and collecting on damages takes a lot of time and work, but it is well worth the effort.

“It’s the right thing to do for the taxpayers,” Foster said. “Instead of tax money going to repair damages, it goes to road repair.”

Surviving the Ride What Twila Tanner’s Been Up To

“Sometimes I just have to pinch myself to make sure I’m not dreaming,” said Twila Tanner, the North Central district maintenance employee who came close to being the sole survivor in CBS’ “Survivor: Vanuatu” contest in December 2004. “What a fantastic ride I’ve had.”

Since the “Survivor: Vanuatu” finale, Tanner has ridden her fame from big cities to small towns. She has promoted everything from MoDOT’s work-zone safety and No MOre Trash! messages to children’s charities such as House of Hope, SIDS and Special Olympics.

Here’s a snapshot of things she’s been doing since entering the limelight:

- In January 2005, Tanner appeared on ABC’s “The View.” “This was my first visit to New York, and besides the dress they put me in, I loved it,” Tanner said.
- Tanner has spoken to numerous groups about making dreams come true and overcoming adversity.
- Tanner has appeared at events in her hometown of Osceola, Iowa, serving as the grand marshal of the Sweet Springs parade and attending a high school after-prom party.
- She’s handled dozens of radio interviews and taped a number of “Survivor” follow-up events.



District 2 Intermediate Crew Worker and “Survivor” star Twila Tanner had her picture snapped with Danny Bonaduce, best known as Danny Partridge from the 1970s sitcom, The Partridge Family, during a visit to Hollywood.

- Most recently, Tanner was interviewed by People Magazine and taped an episode of “Fear Factor” where she competed with another former survivor.

All that is on top of her maintenance work and promoting work zone safety and No MOre Trash! events. She also taped a segment for the Missouri Department of Conservation’s “In Concert with Nature” program and appeared at the central Missouri Earth Day event.

“Being on ‘Survivor’ is an amazing adventure that I will never forget,” Tanner said. “The places I’ve been – and the people I’ve met along the way . . . I

know there is so much I have learned. It was a dream of mine to go on ‘Survivor,’ and I just want to thank MoDOT for allowing me to make my dream come true.”

Tanner Tidbits

Vital stats: Twila Tanner
Age: between 35 and 50
Born: Osceola, Iowa
Hometown: Marshall, Mo.
Marital status: Divorced
Children: One great son
Favorite color, food and TV show: Red and blue; T-bone steak; Survivor (of course), CSI Las Vegas, True Crimes, Justice Files
Favorite place visited: New York City
Who do you look up to? My son. From the time he was born, he gave me great strength and a desire to work hard to provide for him. And my life-long friend, Kenny.
Favorite charity: House of Hope
Favorite celebrities you’ve met: Hugh Hefner, Meredith Vieira (The View), Danny Bonaduce (the Partridge family), Big Tom from “Survivor.”

March Service Anniversaries

35 Years		Marilyn M. Gabriel	D7
Phillip Schouten	D5	Brian A. Todd	D8
Marquis C. Baxter	D7	Tyson R. Rutledge	D9
30 Years		Douglas Clark	D10
Patricia M. Wilson	D5	William K. Brawley	CO
Keith Cates	D10	Sidney T. Cardwell	CO
25 Years		Christopher G. Goeller	CO
Michael K. York	D4	Treasa A. Porter	CO
Paul M. Kramp	D5	5 Years	
20 Years		Peter A. Gladman	D1
Kathy M. Brown	D1	Marisa M. Christy	D2
Charles E. Nyberg	D4	Micah E. Lauer	D3
Matthew J. Budd	D6	Kristy L. Yates	D3
Randy W. Waldron	D6	Chad W. Foley	D4
Richard W. Crews	D8	Eric B. Nold	D4
Hayward O. Grantham	D8	Allan S. Zafft	D4
Bruce A. Woods	D9	Glenn E. Flores	D5
Robert J. Eftink	D10	Jonathan M. Barnes	D6
15 Years		Jason S. Delashmit	D6
Brian S. Baker	D1	Frank A. Laughlin	D6
Chad O. Brown	D1	Philip J. Leffeler	D6
James D. Kier	D1	Stephanie A. Lemon	D6
Damon L. Lafaver	D2	John W. Tyler	D6
Gary R. Winkler	D2	Gary P. Warren	D6
Sandra E. Chapman	D4	Bobby E. Wooten	D6
Dwayne P. Dille	D5	David C. Lolley	D7
Donald G. Gillispie	D5	Lloyd D. Coffey	D8
Murl R. Simler	D6	Teresa L. Huntzicker	D8
John O. McDowell	D10	William W. Scharnhorst	D8
Randy E. Swanigan	CO	Travis D. Thiemann	D8
Stephen J. Bushko	CO	Randall W. Ipock	D9
Donna M. Madison	CO	Shaheed Almudhafar	CO
10 Years		Elizabeth A. Bax	CO
Darrin G. Embree	D2	Darla H. Cliburn	CO
Hugh D. Harrison	D4	Danny O. Eastwood	CO
John W. Kruse	D6	Ryan C. Gates	CO
Belinda S. Niswonger	D6	Lisa M. Gillmore	CO
Jeffrey B. Roberts	D6	Glen M. Lutz	CO
Chad A. Burton	D7	Gabriel L. Schubert	CO
		Linda G. Wyss	CO

January Retirements

Name	Location	Years of Service	Name	Location	Years of Service
David Beavers	D4	28	Roger Sweiger	D1	35
William Bell	D10	38	Timothy Tiller	D1	34
Henry Buechter	CO	29	Alvin Tooley	D8	28
David Borghardt	D7	27	Eldon Turner	D2	32
Donald Crites	D8	27	Richard Walter	D7	37
Ronald Danuser	D5	32			
Paul Earley	D3	27			
Gary Gibson	D1	35			
James Hanshaw	D7	31			
Lionel Hays	D2	14			
Kenneth Herron	D1	29			
Larry Kroutil	D8	29			
Francisco Linan	D6	32			
Rosel Little	D6	23			
Anthony Mayer	D3	34			
Christine McKnight	D1	21			
Gary O'Brien	D6	28			
Larry Peek	D4	25			
Jerry Rawlings	D4	21			
Gary Reiners	D9	29			
Thomas Shockley	CO	31			
Robert Smiley	D10	27			
Dennis Smith	D4	24			
Richard Strong	D9	14			

In Memoriam

<i>Active Employees</i>		
Dennis A. Belloir	D5	Jan. 12
Pablo Castillo	CO	Jan. 19
<i>Retirees</i>		
Joseph D. Long	D3	Nov. 17
Elton C. Cook	D4	Jan. 2
Leroy Childs	D2	Jan. 10
Oliver R. Bergschneider	D4	Jan. 12
John O. Shively	D5	Jan. 14
Elsie S. Marshall	CO	Jan. 17
Leo M. White	D4	Jan. 27
Jerry C. Hassler	D5	Feb. 2
Alvin D. Colvin	CO	Feb. 2



Central Office

Rogers Is New Head of Audits and Investigations

By Rachel Van Tuyl

For 20 years, Bill Rogers was a special agent conducting major criminal and fraud investigations for the Inspector General of the Air Force. Now, as MoDOT's new director of Audits and Investigations, he plans to use his experience to help make the unit a benchmark for other agencies.

Rogers said he doesn't foresee any big changes for the unit and instead plans to "build on the strong foundation" left by his predecessors. However, the passage of Amendment 3 means MoDOT will spend \$7.3 billion on construction over the next five years, which Rogers said makes it a prime target for fraud, waste and abuse.

To prevent fraud, waste and abuse, Rogers has planned a three-pronged, proactive approach for Audits and Investigations that includes:

- **Deterrence.** Through proactive activities such as fraud briefings and seminars, the unit will educate MoDOT employees on signs to watch for and how to report suspected violations. As one of its first steps in this direction, the unit held a seminar Jan.19 for about 200 employees on detecting

"We want to make sure taxpayers get the best value for every dollar spent."

Bill Rogers, director of Audits and Investigations

and preventing antitrust practices.

- **Detection.** The unit will focus on detecting incidents of fraud, waste and abuse through audits, contract monitoring and reporting efforts.
- **Investigation.** Audits and Investigations staff will actively and quickly



Bill Rogers became director of Audits and Investigations on Dec. 21, 2005.

investigate incidents that have been detected and reported. Those responsible will be held accountable for illegal acts.

want to make sure taxpayers get the best value for every dollar spent."

Rogers began working for MoDOT in July 2001 as the investigations supervisor because he said he was looking for a challenge. He said he enjoys his work for MoDOT.

"It's a different challenge every day, and I like the people," Rogers said. "We have a lot of good people who want to do good work, and I commend the department for having such dedicated employees."

Rogers believes it is important to taxpayers that incidents are dealt with quickly and efficiently.

"We are accountable to Missouri taxpayers and need to be responsible stewards of their money," he said. "We

MoDOT Is Second in Charitable Giving

MoDOT employees have once again stepped to the plate to help those in need. This is the fourth consecutive year we have donated the second largest amount out of 27 agencies toward the Missouri State Employees

Charitable Campaign. In addition, this is the fifth time in 21 years that state employees have given more than \$1 million to the campaign.

"This record number of contributions came at a time when MoDOT em-

ployees also recognized the immediate need for assistance in areas hit by Hurricane Katrina and held events outside the charitable campaign to raise funds and collect items for those in need," said Dianna Silvester, information systems supervisor, who coordinated MoDOT's charitable campaign.

Because of MoDOT's continued success in giving to the statewide campaign, Silvester was asked to present Gov. Matt Blunt with a check for \$1,013,774 during a ceremony in his

Capitol office. The check represented the total donations given by more than 8,600 state employees.

"The ongoing success of MoDOT's charitable campaign is due to the hard work and dedication of fellow MoDOT employees from all across the state who give of their time to volunteer to coordinate the campaign within their areas," said Silvester.

She then issued the following challenge: "Let's see if we can be number one next year."



Shaun Schmitz

Information Systems Supervisor Dianna Silvester presents a Missouri State Employees Charitable Campaign check to Gov. Matt Blunt.

for more info

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Williams Presents MLK Awards

MoDOT's David Williams recently helped Gov. Matt Blunt present awards to winners of the Martin Luther King, Jr. art contest. The two presented the awards Jan. 11 in Jefferson City at the state's annual celebration of King's birthday. Here they are shown with Latrice Belton, a second grader at East Elementary School in Jefferson City who took first place in the contest. Williams works for MoDOT's Equal Opportunity Division.



D1

Northwest

Working Together

Story and photos by Elaine Justus



District Engineer Don Wichern shared information with the assembled group of 50+ county commissioners and economic planners on Jan. 27 in Cameron.

Regional Planning Organizations. Every District in MoDOT has them, and they have become an important and integral part of how we do the business of transportation. In the Northwest District, we work with three: The Green Hills Regional Planning Commission (GHRPC-which covers Harrison, Daviess and Caldwell counties); the Northwest Missouri Regional Council of Governments (NWRCOG-which covers Atchison, Nodaway, Worth, Holt and Gentry counties); and the Mo-Kan Regional Council of Governments (which covers Andrew, Buchanan, Clinton and DeKalb counties).

The Northwest District's Transportation Planning Engineer Shannon Kusilek meets with each of them individually on a regular basis, but on Jan. 27, something decidedly out of the ordinary (for us) took place. The three planning organizations got together and decided to host a joint meeting they called "Transportation Planning and Decision Making." Roughly translated, it was a Transportation Advisory Council (TAC) workshop. A cross-section of people from MoDOT was invited including Technical Support Engineer Bill Stone and Long Range Transportation Planning Manager Eric Curtit from Jefferson City, District Engineer Don Wichern, Bridge Engineer Rick Kingery, Area Engineers Marty Liles and Erik Maninga, Community Rela-

tions Manager Elaine Justus and (of course) Shannon Kusilek.

Who was in the audience of almost 50 people? A mix of county commissioners, economic development representatives and interested parties from throughout the 12-county area who are involved in the planning process for their individual communities.

So what actually took place? Under the careful guidance of the combined planning organizations, they received:

A historical overview of TACs from Bill Stone.

An explanation of what Missouri Advance Planning is and how it could impact their communities "in the long-term" by Eric Curtit.

From Don Wichern, they received a history of MoDOT that included not only our emergence from "mud roads," but how Missouri ranks when compared to surrounding states in terms of miles of roads and amount of money taken in and spent.

Lastly, Shannon Kusilek gave them a realistic idea of how MoDOT's planning process works, what our State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) is, and a timeframe of when communities need to begin their discussions to



Nancy Thomson, executive director of the Northwest Missouri Regional Council of Governments, showed attendees how to get the greatest benefit from their workbooks.

to all the states that surround us. Being seventh largest in the number of miles to take care of and 44th in the amount of money per mile we're able to spend is a figure that surprises almost every



A timeline showing the actual length of time each entity (from individual to planning organization to district planning to state planning) needs in order to do their jobs was drawn by Transportation Planning Engineer Shannon Kusilek. It surprised many attendees to find out how long the process actually takes.



The Green Hills Regional Planning Commission was represented by Executive Director Randy Railsback who encouraged everyone there to get involved.

one who hears it, except for MoDOT employees.

Following MoDOT's presentations, the executive directors from the three planning organizations spoke to the group. Tom Bliss, from Mo-Kan, Nancy Thomson from the NWRCOG and Randy Railsbeck from GHRPC provided each community representative with a workbook of tools they can use to handle the planning process in their own communities. Also within each workbook was a timeline that identified when information was needed and to who should receive it. Best of all, each attendee now has a name to go with a face, a phone number and an e-mail address for future personal contact.

Taken all together, it was an extremely successful event, and we here in the Northwest District feel lucky to have Regional Planning Organizations that are such "futuristic" thinkers.

even be considered for inclusion in the MoDOT plan.

There were a number of times when the comment "I didn't know that" was heard from the crowd. It was especially noticeable during Don Wichern's presentation about how Missouri compares

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D2

North Central

Doing a Good Job With Safety

by Shari Dye

“Good Job!” That’s the message to all District 2 employees for helping make 2005 a safe and successful year. While the number of worker compensation claims were only slightly reduced, the severity of the injuries was substantially lower. The reduction in lost work-days from 100 in 2004 to 57 in 2005 is an indication that the injuries were less severe and required less time for recovery. With the hazards you face on a daily basis, this is a testament to your commitment to safety.

Safety doesn’t stop with our employees. It also extends to the traveling public. Along with the reduction in injuries, we

also show a reduction in the number of vehicle liability claims. By tarping trucks, being aware of spreader speed, watching surrounding areas while moving, etc., you have shown the public our commitment to providing a quality product and a safe traveling experience.

Again, I want to thank District 2 employees for their hard work and persistent dedication to safety. With their help, we can continue to reduce claims and strive for less than 50 lost workdays in 2006.

Minimizing Cross-over Collisions

A recently completed safety project on Interstate 70 in Saline County has already proven its benefit to motorists.

The 27.19-mile project to place guard cable in the median of I-70 from the Lafayette County line to Route K in Cooper County began in April and was completed in December.

This district project was part of a \$3.5 million dollar statewide effort to place

Skeptics of the safety value of the cable need only to look at the statistics of one county to know this is a huge safety enhancement. The 24-mile section of cable in Saline County was hit 25 times between July 2005 and January 2006. Although there is no way to predict how many of these vehicles would have traveled into the oncoming traffic in the



These tire tracks show how the new guard cable kept the vehicle from traveling across the median into oncoming traffic.

the cable the entire length of the I-70 corridor from St. Louis to Kansas City.

The work included adding dirt to the median to flatten the slope, placing a rock bedding four foot wide by four inches deep, and then installing the three-strand guard cable.

opposite lanes, it’s easy to see the cable is doing its job.

The nearly 26,000 vehicles traveling this stretch of I-70 daily are far less likely to be involved in a crossover head-on collision thanks to this recent safety enhancement.

D2’s Suspended Bridge Crew



Bridge Crew’s Phil Clevenger, Scott Thompson, Eddie Woods and Scott Teter get suspended during training

When Senior Performance Analyst Ray Wood of Central Office was asked to develop training for District One’s bridge crew by Safety and Health Manager Lori Dake, he was all too happy to help.

The Jeff City bridge crew had been using Swing-lo scaffolding for several years and found it to be an excellent

product. After researching the product herself and seeing demonstrations from the Jeff City crew, Lori and District One’s bridge crew also purchased Swing-lo scaffolding, along with fall protection and a rescue system.

When Lori approached Ray, he was quickly on board to develop training for the scaffolding and accompanying equipment. Once he had the training program in place, Ray and Bill Gimse, District 1’s special maintenance supervisor, started a pilot program in District 1.

Recently Ray and Bill spent the day with District 2 getting the bridge crew up to speed on the new equipment. The day started with scaffolding training, which

included an overview of MoDOT’s policies and procedures as well as OSHA’s safety standards. The hands-on training educates operations staff on the proper use of the Swing-lo scaffolding on building, inspecting and maintaining. The training also included how to properly wear a personal fall protection device.

The biggest surprise for the crew was learning about orthostatic intolerance or suspension trauma. Although personal fall protection devices can be a lifesaver, they can also present dangers if not used properly, or if a worker remains suspended for a long period of time before being rescued.

Following a fall, a worker may remain suspended in a harness. Suspended immobility can lead to a state of unconsciousness. Depending on the length of time a suspended worker is unconscious and/or immobile, and the level of blood accumulating in the veins suspension trauma could lead to death. Although such fatalities are uncommon, the worker can experience many other effects from being suspended. Nausea, dizziness, faintness and increased heart rate are just a few signs a worker might experience that could eventually lead to trauma.

Because of these risk factors, it is important for workers to know how to properly

use the fall protection equipment and what signs to look for if a coworker falls and is suspended, particularly if they are unconscious or a head trauma is suspected.

“I think we all learned a lot from the training,” said Special Maintenance Supervisor Scott Thompson. “Because we won’t be using the equipment the same way as say Jeff City’s bridge crew, Ray and Bill did a good job adapting the training to what we need to know in our district. Another important point is that before you set up a job you need to have a plan in case someone does fall. Even a little thing like the placement of a ladder could make a big difference.”

District 2’s bridge crew will be receiving their Swing-lo scaffolding in the near future, and all seasonal workers will be trained as they come on board. Thanks to Ray and Bill for their part in helping to keep our bridge crew safe.

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The crew practices assembling the fall protection equipment.

D3

Northeast

Is it Winter or Spring?

With the springlike winter weather, MoDOT’s concrete crews have barely had a break from their primary roles of replacing portions of our highways in preparation for resurfacing this summer. “We poured concrete almost the entire month of January,” said Supervisor Sam Vice. Since they had let their seasonal help go the month before, they relied on maintenance crews to help them out. “Besides providing the usual traffic control, we actually had them assisting on the pours,” Sam continued. “And we really appreciate the

“This crew produced the highest quality concrete repair on seven routes significantly cheaper than expected.”

Ed Hassinger, St. Louis District Engineer

great help,” he added. This year, the Northeast District has hired more seasonals and will divide the concrete crew. “One of crews will work throughout the St. Louis District,” Sam explained. Last year, we were asked to help out down there because of the SRI work needing to get done so quickly,” he continued. They impressed the St. Louis District so much, they were asked to come back. The other crew will be focusing on Routes 61 and 36 and some of the two lanes highways that we’ve had a hard time getting to in the last year.

Lee Ann Kelly Recognized



Lee Ann Kelly, a construction inspector for the Troy Project Office, felt very honored to have been selected by Director Pete Rahn as an example of how MoDOT employees go above and beyond the call of duty during the course of their every-

day work. She was recognized during Pete’s State of the Transportation Address to the General Assembly for saving two lives while on the job on Route 61 south of Troy last summer. Lee Ann and her supervisor, Mark Croarkin, enjoyed the day at the Capitol and were impressed with the address. “I know there are employees who do this all the time,” Lee Ann said modestly.

Donnie Mudd retired as Monroe City’s maintenance supervisor on March 1. He had 38 years of service with MoDOT.



Charles Walter retired as the maintenance specialist at the Paris building on Feb. 1 with 16 years of service.

The Heart of MoDOT

The Northeast District had a great 2005. To thank the 400+ team, “Employees are the Heart of MoDOT” meetings were held throughout February. A local health care agency provided heart healthy snacks and information. Assistant District Engineer Dave Silvester led the “feel-good” sessions by highlighting some of the accomplishments, reviewing the district Tracker, and updating employees on the exciting things happening. The session ended with a computer presentation full of

pictures of our employees from last year.



Dave Silvester was caught off guard with the camera flash during a session at New Florence’s maintenance building.

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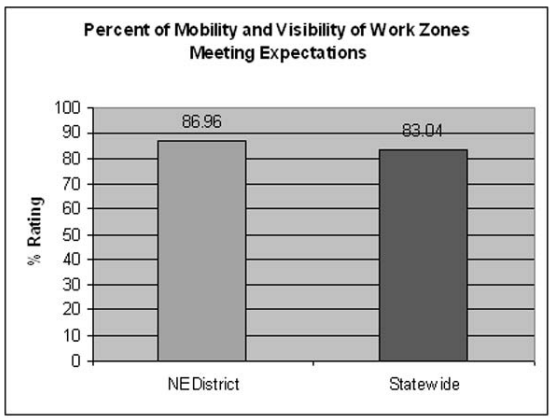
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The concrete crew worked throughout the unusually warm January, but needed assistance because their seasonals were gone. Bowling Green, Hannibal and Palmyra maintenance crews actually assisted in the pours, besides providing traffic control.

Work Zones Looking Good in Northeast Missouri

As we prepare for even more work zones this year, MoDOT is continually working toward improving the mobility and visibility in the zones. Last year, 46 work zones were evaluated in the Northeast District and of those, nearly 87 percent met expectations, which is higher than the statewide average and third in the state. “The biggest challenge is ensuring we have input from all our core team members early in the design process,” said Ken



Warbritton, operations engineer. “We are making suggestions and providing comments on the current process to Central Office for their review.



Kim Armour, highway designer, shows cub scouts a large map of a highway during a recent tour. The Northeast District has provided safety and transportation education to more than 2,000 children and adults this fiscal year. Those interested in a guest speaker can go to www.modot.org/northeast to make an online request.

D4

Kansas City Area

Proof Positive That the Triangle Is Untangling

by Steve Porter

Motorists driving eastbound Interstate 435 into the Triangle during afternoon rush hour probably already know this: the Triangle is, indeed, untangling.

But how can we prove it?

Kansas City Scout, the regional intelligent transportation system, uses cameras and roadway sensors to monitor and measure congestion. One statistic popped out of their traffic report this month. Eastbound I-435 sensors located just west of the Triangle indicated that peak rush hour weekday traffic averaged 22.7 miles per hour in July 2005. That was before two new eastbound I-435 lanes opened up through the Triangle. One new lane was added for the northbound I-435 movement and a second new lane was added across the eastbound Interstate 470 bridge. By December, several months after the new lanes opened, average traffic speeds during afternoon rush hour were 51.9 miles per hour.

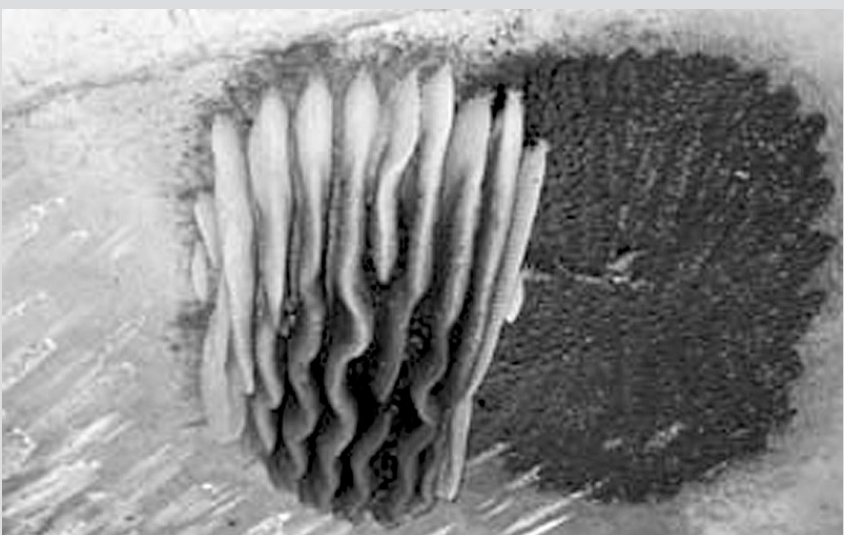
Not bad, but there's room for improvement. Expect flow to speed up even more next summer, after MoDOT opens an additional lane from eastbound I-435 across the eastbound I-470 bridge.

Not all eastbound I-435 traffic will move as smoothly, however. Motorists exiting to southbound Route 71 will encounter slower speeds for the next two or three years while construction continues on Route 71 from Red Bridge Road to Blue Ridge Boulevard. MoDOT is scheduled to complete the outer roads along Route 71 by the end of this year, and in 2007 shift traffic onto those outer roads while mainline Route 71 pavement and bridges are removed, realigned and replaced.



Steve Porter

Jerome Turner maneuvers a plow truck through the Route 58 and Westover Road roundabout in Belton Jan. 10. Although the early January snowfall was minimal, a 10-inch snowstorm in early December gave plow operators and motorists a challenging first shot at the four new roundabouts. Both MoDOT plow operators – a first-time driver and a 15-year veteran of snowfights – had no problems with the new intersections.



Wess Murray

Maintenance Superintendent Wess Murray spotted this active honeybee hive under the Route M/O bridge over Interstate 70 in Lafayette County. The dark area to the right is all that remains of a hive located in this same spot about eight years ago.



Jennifer Benefield

Senior Right of Way Specialist Dan Hastings presents Lafayette County Recorder of Deeds Patsy Olvera and her staff with a certificate of appreciation for outstanding service to MoDOT in Lexington, Mo. Jan. 10.

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Fairfax Bridge Repairs Completed in Three Days

by Joel Blobaum

MoDOT crews made fast work of repairs to a 72-year-old bridge in the Kansas City region.

The Fairfax Bridge, which carries the southbound lanes of Route 69 from Missouri into Kansas, closed for repairs on February 6. The work was expected to take approximately three weeks.

But the bridge reopened on February 9 – much to the surprise and delight of the 7,500 motorists who use the bridge on an average day.

“Removing the rivets was not as difficult as our crews expected, so the work took a fraction of the time estimated,” said Chris Redline, assistant district engineer.

A detour to divert traffic headed for the Fairfax District in Kansas City, Kan., had directed motorists to the nearby Interstate 635 bridge and then east on Kansas Route 5.

On Jan. 11, MoDOT restricted bridge traffic to vehicles weighing 10 tons or less after routine inspections revealed that splice plates on lower sections of a truss had developed cracks. Crews installed new splice plates while the bridge was closed, and the 10-10 weight restriction was removed.



Paul Russ

Fairfax Bridge repairs were completed in three days instead of the scheduled three weeks — much to the delight of the traveling public.

“The repairs posed something of a challenge because they involved the lower chord of a large truss that's a significant distance from the ground, but MoDOT crews decided to handle the work themselves,” Redline said. “They more than proved their capabilities by completing the repairs so quickly.”

D5

Central

Long-time Employees Enjoy Their Retirement

Margaret “Molly” Holst



Molly worked for District 5 for 21 years and retired from her position as senior construction technician on Feb. 1. Molly has also served

as a crew worker, senior crew worker and construction technician. She retired from the Columbia Project Office, but has worked at the Boonville maintenance building and in Jefferson City as part of the signing and striping crew.

Molly plans to spend her retirement with her four grandchildren. She is also looking forward to going turkey hunting and says she’s glad she won’t have to worry about working on the first day of the season.

Planned trips to California, Oregon and Alaska mean Molly isn’t worried about finding enough to do.

“If you think I’ll get bored, think again,” said Molly. “If you get bored after you retire, it’s your fault!”

Ronald Danuser



Ronnie retired effective Jan. 1 as a maintenance superintendent. His responsibilities included overseeing the Camdenton,

Osage Beach, Montreal, Iberia and Tusculumbia maintenance buildings. Ronnie has worked at MoDOT for 32 years and held positions of crew worker, senior crew worker and maintenance supervisor during his career.

Ronnie and his wife, Brenda, have two children, Mary Beth and Scott. Since his retirement, Ronnie has spent time working on his farm. He also enjoys hunting, fishing and NASCAR.

“What I will miss most will be the people I worked with and encountered during my years at MoDOT,” said Ronnie. “It will be nice to sleep and let someone else worry about snowstorms and those phone calls in the middle of the night.”

This Month at District 5



Eric Schroeter

The Warsaw maintenance crew trims trees on Route Z in Benton County. Branches that hang over the road can damage vehicles or become a hazard if they fall during a storm.



Holly Dentner

Transportation Planning Manager Mike Dusenberg met with planning partners on Feb. 10 to discuss priorities for the upcoming year.

Career Fair Attracts Potential Employees

by Holly Dentner

10

MoDOT relies on its engineers to shape and monitor projects and help plan for future transportation needs. When it comes to hiring new engineering staff, finding qualified candidates means MoDOT will function more efficiently and produce better results.

On Feb. 14-15, Project Development Engineer Steve Engelbrecht joined other engineers and Central Office Human Resources staff at the University of Missouri – Columbia to attend the College of Engineering’s Career Fair. The annual event allows students to meet with prospective employers and explore the possibilities of future employment.

“MoDOT will be at the career fair with lots of other companies, but we have the benefit of being able to offer a variety of jobs,” said Engelbrecht. “We can attract candidates who perform their

job from a computer workstation or those who like to be onsite during construction activities.”

Engelbrecht wasn’t the only MoDOT engineer attending the career fair: Paula Gough (District 2), Dennis Heckman (Central Office Bridge Division), Matt Killion (District 4), and Jodie Puhr (District 4) were also there to scout for potential new hires.

On the first day they talked to students about their interests as they stopped by the MoDOT booth. The second day consisted of more formal interviews with the students who may be good candidates for working at MoDOT.

“We attend job fairs to promote MoDOT, of course, and to potentially find new employees,” said Javal Burton, Central Office Human Resources specialist.

“When I speak with a student, I look for those who show an interest in the department, and whose academics, job experience and attitude make them a desirable candidate for the position available.”

While this career fair focused exclusively on engineering students, MoDOT attends fairs across the state for students with a variety of majors.

On Feb. 15, District 5 Human Resources Manager Dawn Klinger attended

a career fair at Linn State Technical College to recruit associate degree-level students for technician positions. Klinger says these fairs are valuable to MoDOT and potential employees even if there are no positions open.

“Even if we don’t have a specific lead, we still like to maintain that level of networking with qualified candidates,” said Klinger. “Career fairs and other meet-and-greet opportunities are a great way to do that.”



Holly Dentner

District 4 Intermediate Highway Designer Jodie Puhr and District 5 Project Development Engineer Steve Engelbrecht meet a student from the University of Missouri-Columbia’s College of Engineering.

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D6

St. Louis Area

New Position Reaches Out To The St. Louis Community

by Thomas Miller

Reyna Spencer is the new community liaison for District 6. She started in this newly created position on Feb. 16.

With five years of experience, Spencer is well versed in establishing and maintaining positive relationships with the community. Most recently, she was the community engagement coordinator for East-West Gateway Council of Governments where she engaged the community by developing outreach activities for community-based organizations, human service providers, grass roots organizations and workforce development. As a housing development specialist for the Wellston Community Support Association, one of her duties was to plan and participate in community activities to increase positive relations with the residents and community leaders.

As the new community liaison for D6, Spencer will facilitate partnerships with the St. Louis area community in regards to minority recruitment for MoDOT employment, procurement, equal opportunity advocacy, the disadvantaged business enterprise program and any other MoDOT initiatives that engage the minority community at large.

As Director Pete Rahn specified in his State of the Transportation Address, "While a complete closure is off the table, we are giving more people a seat at the table. A job can change a life. Therefore, we are working with community organizations that represent Missouri's under served to ensure greater opportunity for low income and minority citizens in our highway program. It is our hope that I-64 will become a model for the future."

Spencer's first charge is to work with the I-64 team and MoDOT's External Civil Rights group to achieve this commitment.

In addition to the I-64 project, she will be actively involved with local organizations and elected officials to increase communication and build relationships with MoDOT. She will conduct outreach efforts such as recruiting and marketing of activities with minority and female organizations and political representatives. She will be an advocate



Reyna Spencer is the new Community Liaison for D6.

for the department's efforts in equal opportunity and affirmative action. It will also be Spencer's responsibility to help MoDOT identify business opportunities and promote and educate the community about business development programs offered by MoDOT and other agencies and organizations.

Question: What is your vision for this position?

Answer: This will be another opportunity to challenge my skills in community relations. Solid relationships between communities and organizations are key to positive community growth. My goal of helping create, establish and maintain productive relationships will be aided by my working network in the St. Louis and Jefferson City areas. Taking this position gives me a great opportunity to use the skills and network I have built. Hopefully, my contribution will lead to a greater continuity between MoDOT and its constituency.

Question: Why did you take the position?

Answer: I want to be the type of person people think of when they need help understanding MoDOT's policies and programming. I want the community to feel like MoDOT is an ally, not an enemy. I also want our partners to have comfort in knowing this position is a resource for them for advocacy and information. This position will reflect MoDOT's enthusiasm toward community partnership.

Spencer's office is located at the Metropolitan Education and Training Center, 6347 Plymouth, Room 105A, St. Louis, MO, 63133. She can be reached at 314-726-2023 or via e-mail at reyna.spencer@modot.mo.gov.

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Jefferson County Safety Partners Establish I-55 TravelSafe Zone



Megan McEntee

Festus City Administrator Steve Stoll and District Engineer Ed Hassinger display the TravelSafe proclamation at a news conference on Feb. 3. The Jefferson County Partnership, a multi-agency group formed to improve safety on Interstate 55, established a TravelSafe Zone on Interstate 55 from north of Route Z to Route 67. The Festus, Herculaneum and Pevelly Police Departments, the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office and the Missouri State Highway Patrol are making this section of roadway a "zero tolerance" operation where officers strictly enforce all traffic laws. There have been 3,000 crashes with more than 1,000 injured and 28 people who have died since 1999 on this 8.5-mile stretch of roadway. The goal is to reduce the number by 10 percent in 2006.

Securing The Load

by Megan McEntee

MoDOT maintenance employees ranging from crew workers to maintenance supervisors are going through a new type of training. Cargo Securement Training is teaching 396 employees how to properly secure cargo. The training started in December and is being held through March.

Cargo can be tools such as shovels and rakes, road material such as cold mix, hot mix, asphalt millings or concrete slabs or large equipment such as mowers, front-end loaders, backhoes and rollers. It is the operator's responsibility to ensure the cargo is loaded and secured for transport.

Unsecured cargo could cause damage to a department vehicle. Loose or improperly secured cargo could seriously injure or kill someone during a quick stop or crash.

Heavy equipment and machinery, which often weighs 10,000 pounds or more, need to be restrained from any type of movement using a minimum of four separate tiedowns.

There are three principles of securing cargo:

1. Cargo must be fully contained within the vehicle, and the vehicle must be



Megan McEntee

Maintenance Supervisor Don Redmond secures a tractor by tying it down with chains.

- strong enough to contain the cargo.
2. Cargo is immobilized with structures, blocking or bracing to prevent shifting or tipping.
 3. Cargo must be immobilized or secured by tiedowns on or within a vehicle to prevent shifting or tipping.

"I could not have accomplished this large-scale training effort in such a short span of time without the cooperation of all the maintenance superintendents and maintenance supervisors," said Carolyn Smith, maintenance training coordinator.

No training class is successful without good teachers. The following employees taught both Cargo Securement Training and Security Awareness Training: Mike Brooks, Ken Cherry, Teri Feller, Tom Gallaway, Gary Gerlemann, Carlton Hagene, Phil Krull, Terry Lancaster, Jerry A. Lewis, Dave Pearson, Daron Rhodes, Frank Tidd and Lance Willman.

D7

Southwest

Stockton Employees Move Into New Maintenance Building

by Wendy Brunner-Lewis

In May 2003, a series of tornadoes ripped across southwest Missouri, leaving behind millions of dollars of destruction in their wake. District 7 lost its Aurora maintenance building and half of its Stockton maintenance building. Aurora wasn't rebuilt, and the Stockton employees patched up what was left of their building and made do until a new building could be constructed.

Almost three years later, the new Stockton building was ready for occupation. The 4,500-square foot building was built on 10 acres just outside of Stockton.



Stockton employees (l-r) Dale Daniels, Russell Hogan, Doug Haines and Robin Wright waited three years for a new building.

"It has electric cord reels, ceiling fans, a separate employee break area," said Stockton Maintenance Supervisor Russell Hogan proudly. "We were left with two truck bays after the tornado hit, and now we're back up to five. We're all pretty happy with the space to spread out."

The old building in the middle of town will be sold eventually.

Hogan said a cold storage building will be built in the future, which makes him happy. "Our storage building was blown away, so our equipment had to sit out for almost three years. That's hard on it."

The old salt storage was blown away too, and it was replaced with a fabric salt storage building.

"All four of us are happy here," Hogan said of himself and his employees. "Being stuck in half a building for

so long was beginning to be a little too much togetherness."



The new Stockton maintenance building, above, and the old building the day after the May 3 tornado ripped half the building apart, below.



New District Engineer Meets with District 7 Employees



Less than one month after Becky Baltz began her duties as district engineer, she was out meeting employees. She's shown here with Neosho Maintenance Supervisor Mark Willis.

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Life After MoDOT...D7 Retirees' Corner Delores Atteberry Still Going Strong 21 Years Later

by Lita Cambers

When Delores Atteberry started working for the highway department in July 1972, Wilbur Stegner was the district engineer. Her first job was as a stenographer, and she went on to become district payroll clerk, senior payroll clerk and district auditor. She retired in May 1985.

Delores has spent the past 20 years of retirement traveling with friends to Hawaii, Alaska, the Caribbean, England, Scotland and Ireland.

She also volunteers her time at Prestige of St. John's Hospital in Joplin. As a volunteer, she helps with bake sales, registering people for health fairs and working on a St. John's scrapbook. She has also traveled with Prestige members to Williamsburg, Va., Washington, D.C., and New York.

Delores was married 41 years to Jim Atteberry, and they had two children.



She has five grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

Delores said life after MoDOT is a very busy one, and although she will be 86 years young in April, she doesn't plan to slow down.

D8

Springfield Area



D8 Gears Up Response To Road Emergencies

by Bob Edwards

A few months ago, it typically took District 8 maintenance crews two hours to get to an emergency on Interstate 44 in the Springfield area, set up traffic control and close a lane. Now, without having to go to the shop and round up equipment needed, a crew can have traffic control in place in about 50 minutes.

The reason: MoDOT has put together a more systematic emergency response procedure that is quicker and safer.

Along the Springfield-Marshfield-Lebanon corridor on I-44 and the major roadways encircling Springfield, the district is using specially equipped trucks, assigning round-the-clock response duty to specific crew workers and working more closely with police, fire and ambulance agencies to improve on-scene communication.

Procedures are being refined incident to incident, said Maintenance Superintendent Earl Wallace, coordinating the district's emergency response program.

Wallace said the system is working well and is a great improvement over what the district had done in the past in a region where traffic continues to increase.

The police and other emergency workers can focus on the emergency while MoDOT moves in at the proper location and takes care of traffic control.

"Everybody's watching each other's back," Wallace said.

Efforts to beef up the emergency response program got started in early 2005 with Smooth Roads Initiative projects on the horizon, said Assistant District Engineer Matt Seiler.

With such a large number of work zones scheduled, the district had to improve its ability to keep traffic moving – either through or around the scene – as soon as possible after a crash or stallout.

"It's part of actively managing our work zones," Seiler said.

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Emergency Response Facts

- **Vehicles** – two trucks, one trailer, one pickup for Springfield metro and Marshfield/Lebanon – put into service in late November and early December
- **Crew workers** – eight in Springfield metro; five in Marshfield/Lebanon; rotating 24-hour on-call
- **Equipment** – Emergency lighting, lighted arrow boards, "Accident Ahead" and other signs, traffic cones, absorbent materials, hand tools and much more

A major plus is that the district is better able to help with any incident on the busiest roads, NOT just those that occur in a work zone.

Crews are responding to four to eight incidents a week in Springfield and two to six a week in the Marshfield/Lebanon area.

First in State: No Lost-Time Accidents

by Angela Eden

District 8 employees in 2005 lost no work time due to on-the-job accidents – a first for any MoDOT district for a calendar year since records began being kept in 1987.

A key reason for such a significant result is safety-minded workers and supervisors, said Assistant District Engineer Matt Seiler.

"Our employees pay attention and they watch out for one another," he said.

Certainly, workers were injured in the

"Talkin' Transportation" Call-In Radio Show

KWTO 560 AM, Springfield
10-10:50 a.m. Wednesdays
radiospringfield.com

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Bob Edwards

D8 at Work

Republic Senior Crew Worker Paula Hess, left, and Sunshine Senior Crew Worker Jerry VanWyk (top photo) are part of a crew sealing pavement cracks along Route 174 west of Republic.

Traffic Operations Engineer Leo Cologna, left, (bottom left photo) talks with a property owner about a project being developed to widen Route 38, or Spur Drive, through Marshfield.

Senior Crew Worker Sim Smitherman, in loader, and Intermediate Crew Worker Kelly Kirk, in dump truck, (bottom right photo) clear rock and other debris out of ditches on Dallas County Route D east of Urbana.

1.1 million hours they worked during 2005, but the injuries were not serious enough to take time off to recover.

"It takes commitment, teamwork and the vigilance of every employee to set such a notable accomplishment," said District 8 Health and Safety Manager Gary McLarry.

In District 8, 85 workers sustained job-

related injuries, with 54 people requiring medical care.

A reduction in work-related injuries means the district spends less on workers compensation claims, Seiler said. Savings will be used for safety-related equipment and training, he said.

Dale Roller Retires

by Angela Eden

Springfield Senior Construction Technician

Service: 36 years (hired May 1, 1970)

Career: Started as maintenance worker, Sparta; transferred to Fordland, 1998; promoted to senior construction technician, Springfield Construction, 1999

Memorable Work: Widening Route 60/413 through Republic in 2004; construction of Route 360 west of Springfield in 2002

Changes: Employees valued more for

their ideas

Quote: "We let people in the field think on their own and improve ways of doing things."

Post-MoDOT Plans: Take it easy for a while, then continue with volunteer work for local charities



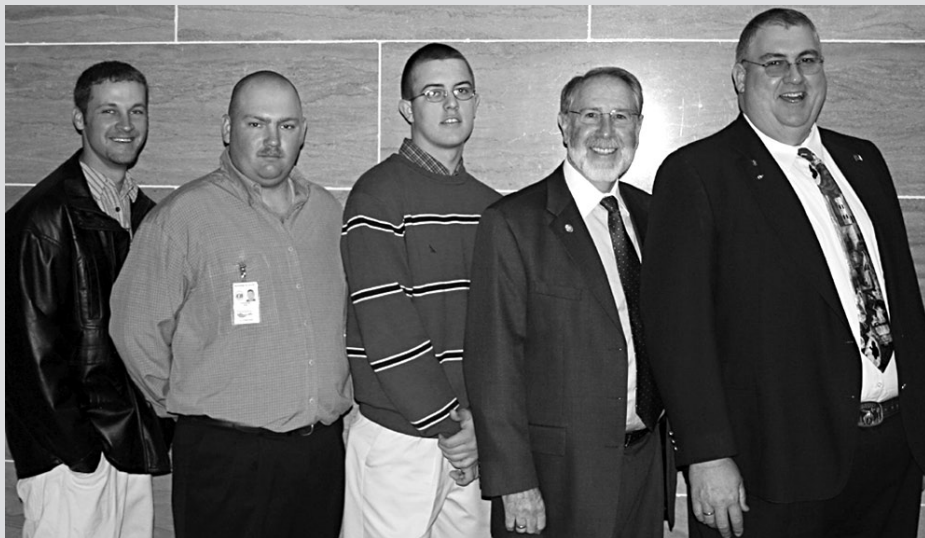
Dale Roller

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South Central

Taum Sauk Responders Honored Foursome recognized in State of Transportation Address

The South Central District was consumed with pride as four of its own were called out during MoDOT Director Pete Rahn's recent State of Transportation Address to Missouri legislators. Operations Engineer Henry Haggard, Centerville Maintenance Workers Justin Blankenship and Ben Meredith and Belleview Maintenance Worker Nick Lambert were given a standing ovation for their response to the Taum Sauk Dam failure last December.



Centerville Maintenance Workers Justin Blankenship and Ben Meredith, Belleview Maintenance Worker Nick Lambert, 152nd District State Rep. J.C. Kuessner and Operations Engineer Henry Haggard gathered for a photo following the State of Transportation Address.

Rahn began the speech by outlining how MoDOT had made good on its promises to improve roads, become a model of state government and wisely spend taxpayer dollars within the last year. Toward the final minutes of the address, he explained how MoDOT employees often go beyond the call of duty.

Haggard was honored for his quick action in coordinating crews to clear Route N, which had been covered with mud, trees and other debris by the wall of water that rushed over it. Meredith, Blankenship and Lambert were given credit for their commitment to the demanding, day-long cleanup effort.

Meredith, while not on MoDOT time, had a huge role that day. As chief of the Lesterville Fire Department, he was charged with the responsibility of incident commander. A drill to respond to such a failure had been scheduled for noon that day but

was moved up by the actual event in the early morning hours. Meredith quickly organized responders and was in direct charge of the day's events.

Blankenship, who was on his way to work when he discovered the aftermath, strapped on a vest provided by Haggard and went to work. He didn't return until early evening, covered in mud with a long day of labor behind him.

Lambert was asked to flag traffic on the highway. He stood his post the entire day, without a break, even eating his lunch while directing traffic.

Rahn expressed his gratitude for the dedication displayed by all four MoDOT team members. "They and many other members of the MoDOT family went home covered in mud, but today they are wrapped in our appreciation," Rahn said. "They reacted to dire circumstances in extraordinary ways."

Also recognized that day was Northeast District Construction Inspector Lee Ann Kelly. Kelly was praised for saving the lives of two accident victims by administering CPR.

Public Meetings Help Communicate I-44 Work

by Ann Marie Newberry

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Three public meetings regarding the construction work along the South Central District's portion of Interstate 44 were held recently. Meetings in Cuba, Rolla and St. Robert, were co-hosted with the Meramec Regional Planning Commission in an effort to bring information to key stakeholders early.

"With 26 projects scheduled corridor-wide in 2006, we felt it was necessary to help media, residents, business owners and others understand what work will be performed and why," said South Central District Engineer Tom Stehn. "These meetings were a great opportunity to introduce the Smooth Roads Initiative in a public setting and allow our customers to ask important questions of MoDOT."

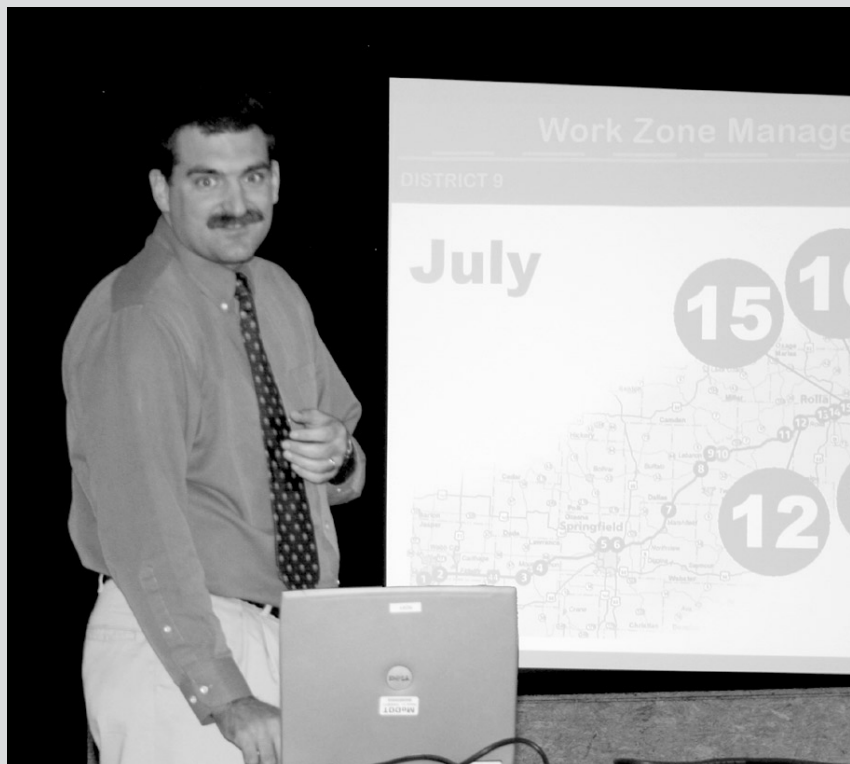
The meetings began with a welcome from Stehn, who then turned the microphone over to representatives from the departments involved in the work from design to work zone management, incident management and communication. Questions were welcome throughout the presentation and during the open floor segment at the end of each meeting.

"We are taking an aggressive approach to managing our work zones and communicating early and often with our target audiences," Stehn explained. "With so much work happening in one short year, there will be delays and inconveniences. Our goal is to minimize them and provide our customers with tools to help them navigate. As our

I-44 awareness campaign states, 'Know Before You Go.'"

Brochures will be placed along the corridor and the MoDOT Web site will feature project information. Additional

efforts, including weekly updates to media and media e-mail blasts, which will be coordinated with message boards to provide real-time traffic data as incidents occur, will be implemented as well.



Construction Engineer Edward Hess is shown speaking at one of three I-44 pre-construction meetings held in the South Central District.

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Southeast

Romas Recognized for Life-Saving Act

What started out as an evening to enjoy some of the best high school basketball in Southeast Missouri, quickly changed for Maintenance Crew Worker Tommy Romas and his son Cody.

Romas was recently honored with MoDOT's Meritorious Safety Award for his life-saving actions that took place on Dec. 27.

Upon arrival at the Show-Me Center in Cape Girardeau to watch the Kelly Hawks in the annual Southeast Missourian

Christmas Tournament, Romas held the door open for an elderly couple. Taking a glance back, he then saw the couple lying on the ground. Apparently the man had taken a tumble and pulled his wife down with him.

"People coming into the building were just walking around the couple, but not stopping. I knew I had to help them," Romas said.

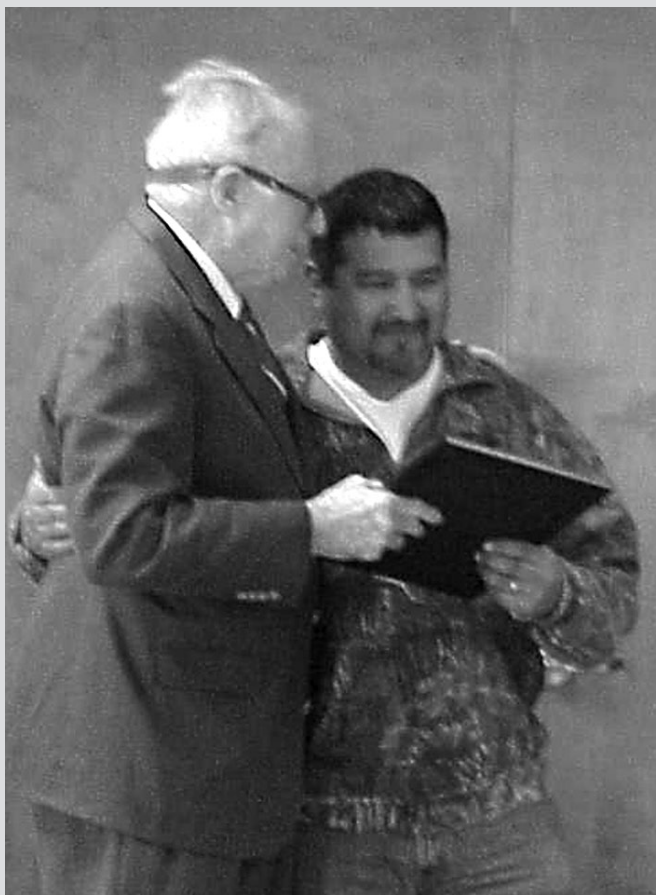
As he helped the elderly woman to her feet, she explained that her husband had heart problems and might be suffering a heart attack.

An Army National Guard recruiter stopped to assist Romas and called 911.

Romas began by checking for the elderly man's pulse.

"I couldn't find his pulse and he was starting to change color," Romas said.

The recruiter began chest compressions while Romas administered resuscitative



General John Waggener, Sr., USA, Ret., shares a commendation letter with Maintenance Crew Worker Tom Romas for his life-saving actions.

breathing on General John Waggener, Sr., USA, Ret.

Within two minutes the retired general was revived. Emergency medical responders transported him to Saint Francis Medical Center in Cape Girardeau where he stayed for two days.

Waggener was then transported to Chesterfield, Mo., where he received a heart valve transplant and under went artery bypass surgery at St. Luke's Hospital.

In addition to the Meritorious Safety Award, Romas received a commendation letter from Waggener at the Feb. 9 ceremony.

"I have a deep sense of gratitude that I feel for Tom and plan to stay in touch, supporting him anyway that I can. Thank you, MoDOT, for recognizing Tom," Waggener said.

Portageville Crew Honored by Highway Patrol



The Portageville maintenance crew with their Certificate of Appreciation from the Missouri State Highway Patrol. MSHP Captain George Ridens poses with the group following the presentation.

Members of the Missouri State Highway Patrol visited the Portageville maintenance facility recently to recognize the MoDOT crew's efforts to help with three substantial traffic accidents that occurred along Interstate 55 since Thanksgiving.

On Feb. 7 MSHP Captain George Ridens presented the Portageville crew with a Certificate of Appreciation for their efforts.

"The time and energy spent by these men and women to assist the motoring public in their travels and to ensure the safety of the investigating officers, was

above and beyond the call of duty," Ridens said. "The MoDOT employees stayed at the scene until the highway could be opened safely with little or no risk to the officers on scene or to the motoring public."

The Pemiscot County accidents occurred on Nov. 23, Jan. 3 and Jan. 5.

"I'm so proud of Maintenance Supervisor Eugene Davis and the entire Portageville Crew. They are always extremely responsive and deliver great service to area motorists," Area Engineer Jeff Lambert said.

Detective on Duty



Gary Vaeth
Maintenance
Supervisor

MoDOT's maintenance crews have certainly found their share of interesting objects while on the job. But this past December, Ste. Genevieve Maintenance Supervisor Gary "Peach" Vaeth made his most interesting discovery.

"The folks from our Bloomsdale rest area called to let me know they found a satchel left by the pay phone," he said. "Inside I found \$1,500."

Vaeth was surprised at the amount of money. The only form of identifica-

tion was a phone number written on the envelope containing the cash.

"I called and it was a lady in Sikeston. She was a relative of the bag's owner," Vaeth said.

The relative set to track the money's owner down. She called the Missouri State Highway Patrol, who ran across the woman in Warrensburg. The patrol alerted the lady that her bag and money had been found.

"She couldn't believe it," Vaeth said. "She said she had written it off and thought there was no hope of getting the money back. She was 78 years old and said she didn't believe in credit cards."

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Mike Myers

Assistant to the Operations Engineer Mike Myers retired in January with over 36 years of service to the Southeast District.

Myers began his career in 1969 as a construction techni-

cian. He joined the materials department in 1970 where he led the group since 1986.

"Our district and the citizens of southeast Missouri will certainly miss the contributions made by Mike. I have known him for many years and wish only the best for Mike," District Engineer Mark Shelton said.

Connections

The mission of *Connections* is to be a monthly source of Missouri Department of Transportation news and feature articles that connect employees statewide. It is distributed to MoDOT employees and retirees.

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Less Is More MoDOT Moves to a “Less-Paper” Business

by Bob Brendel / photos by Shaun Schmitz

Experts have been predicting a move to a “paperless” society for many years. Although we’ve all seen a greater emphasis on electronic communication, paper still runs the business world. MoDOT, though, is making strides to become less dependent on paper.

In December, our Information Technology Improvement Program committee approved plans for a technology project that will significantly reduce the amount of paper we produce for building highways. This project - called “Electronic Plans, Proposals and Bid Letting” - will eliminate the printing of paper plans, proposals and bid documents over the next 18 months.

Today, the districts print plan sheets to be signed and sealed by project managers, then ship these paper plans to Central Office where copies are made to distribute to prospective bidders. In addition, through a collaborative effort, proposals and bid documents are printed for bidders to use in preparation of their bids. Finally, bidders return the bid documents to us on the day of the letting with their proposed prices. This process requires lots of precious time and massive amounts of printing – and paper.

The new project promises to completely change this process. As part of the



A new electronic project will reduce the amount of plans, proposals and bid documents that flow through the Central Office mailroom.

changes, we’ll be introducing a product called “ProjectWise” from Bentley Systems.

ProjectWise is an integrated suite of servers that allows project teams to work together in a more efficient manner and allows for electronic signing and sealing of documents without ever printing them,” said George Kopp, CADD services engineer.

It also manages the workflow of creating project plans to help designers ensure they are always working with the most current version of any drawing. By using ProjectWise, MoDOT project managers will be able to eliminate the step of printing plan sheets and physically signing and sealing them. This will all be done electronically, allowing for instant plan submittals over the department’s network.

After plans are electronically submitted to Central Office, electronic bid documents are created and the plans and bid documents are posted on the department’s Web site for contractors to download.

“Making these documents accessible on the Web not only speeds the process by eliminating the printing and mailing costs, it also improves the accessibility for contractors by allowing plans to be obtained anytime day or night,” Kopp said.

By eliminating the document printing, we expect to save significant costs and provide higher quality, first-generation images for contractors. Coupled with our existing policy to provide electronic design data as a part of large projects, electronic plans allow contractors to prepare more competitive bids, which should save Missouri taxpayers money.

Another part of this project lets us accept bid documents from contractors through the Internet. Internet bidding is already accomplished in more than 20 other DOTs. This process uses public and private key encryption to allow a prospective bidder to obtain our electronic bid documents, fill in the prices of the items that are bid, and submit them back to us through a secure Internet process. The technology that allows

this to work is called “Bid Express,” a product of Infotech in Gainesville, Fla.

“As the supplier of AASHTO’s software that manages bids and contracts, Infotech knows this environment well and provides a solution that integrates with MoDOT’s systems for creating proposals, letting projects and managing contracts,” said Kopp.

Once contractors have their bid document ready to submit, they will be able to access the Bid Express Web site to securely submit their bid to Infotech, which will provide a holding system that allows these bids only to be released to the department on the specific day and time of a scheduled letting. These electronic documents will then be transmitted to MoDOT for a public reading of the bids just as they are read today.

Kopp said, “We’re going to improve our plan development process and save some trees. It’s another example of MoDOT trying to complete its mission better, faster and cheaper, while demonstrating environmental responsibility.”